

# Our Holiday Supplement

# CHRISTMAS BELLS.

1885.

MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR.

1886.

### HER CHRISTMAS BALLS.

Well, what difference would it make? One might as well be happy while one could, and who wouldn't have been happy, blissfully, radiantly, divinely happy with that dear old Danube waltz throbbing on the perfumed air, with his dear arms around one, his tender eyes smiling, his breath waving the fluffs of shining hair, his lips whispering the dearest and the sweetest love words that were ever listened to by mortal woman? Ah—if it could only last forever! If they could but float on—if the music would never cease—if there was no past—no future—if there was nothing but music and Hal and herself—if life could only end while one was happy—if—and the waltz was ended, and she raised her eyes to his with a smile and a sigh.

"Come, sweetheart, it is almost time for me to go. Say good-bye to me in the dear old library," and she let him lead her away though she knew that her mother was watching with angry eyes. And in the library she clung to him and promised to be true to him and wait for him, no matter what happened. Then with fondest words and tenderest kisses he left her, for he must catch the train that was to bear him "over the hills and far away" to where he might win fame and fortune, before coming back to claim her from her haughty mother. And she ran to her room, bathed her tear-wet face and hid the traces with velvet powder before rejoicing her mother's guests. The music was so sad, the people said such silly things. Why did her mother persist in always having a ball on Christmas night? Would they never go? And after they were gone she went to her own room to cry her heart out. But that did no good, for even after all her tears were shed, her heart was so heavy that she could hardly smile. The days were so long, and the months dragged so slowly by. And her mother would not allow her to stay at home. She must go to operas, balls and dinners, and accept the attentions of men who were odious to her, even though they were rich, and most of them young and handsome.

What was life to her without her handsome Hal? How could she enjoy dancing and music while he was working his life out for her? She would never waltz the dear old Danube till he came back,—at any rate they could not compel her to do that. And so she obeyed her mother and danced and sang, but she would not obey so far as to encourage the attentions of any of the men selected by her mother, even though one persistent suitor rejected by the daughter appealed to the mother, and Mrs. Haughton, flattered and pleased with the idea of seeing her only daughter the wife of so wealthy and prominent a man, gave Hilda no peace day or night. Only a mother knows how to nag a daughter on to almost any desperate deed, and Hilda's life became one long and never-ceasing torment, having no leaven of comfort in it except the knowledge that it could not last forever, for Hal would come and take her away.

Mrs. Haughton allowed no correspondence between her daughter and Hal Chester. Hilda was entirely too lovely to be thrown away on a poor man, even though he was the son of an old friend who had lost his entire fortune through the dishonesty of his partner.

Thus Hilda lived on. Sometimes her courage almost gave way, and she felt that anything would be better than the life she led, but her love for Hal saved her from yielding to her mother's persuasions and her own despair.

Hal had been gone nearly four years, and it was drawing on to Christmas and her mother's annual ball. She entered heartily into the preparations,

her heart seemed light, and laughter and song came from her smiling lips. Her mother congratulated herself that Hilda was coming to her senses at last, and forgetting her school-girl penchant for Hal Chester.

But ah, no! Hilda's thoughts were all of Hal, for on that Christmas night almost four years ago, had he not promised to dance the Danube waltz with her?—to come back to her in four years? Who wouldn't sing the old songs when he would soon be asking for them? And he would never leave her again, for she had resolved to marry him let him be poor as he might be; her mother should not influence her now. Why, her heart kept singing "Hal," "Hal," from morning till night, and her first waking and last sleeping thought was of him. She was proud of her beauty because it

her mother's guests, happy, smiling, lovely, dressed as nearly as fashion would allow, like the Hilda of four years ago. All day she had been in a state of expectancy, but now she stood with a half-eager, half-waiting expression in her lovely eyes. Hal was in the city, so much she had learned from a friend, and now she had but to wait a little while, but ah! this little while, this last half hour was longer than the past four years.

She went into the front room where her mother was receiving a few late comers.

"Hilda, my love, here is an old friend for you to welcome."

Had she gotten a glimpse into Heaven that made her lovely face so radiant? "Hal!"

He held her hands in his as he spoke frank words of greeting.

"And here, Hilda, is my wife Aline, this is my dear old friend and sweetheart, Hilda. You two must love each other as much as I love you both."

And Hilda took the dainty hand held out to her, and spoke kindest words of greeting to Hal's wife, while the radiance died out of her face and life forever, as borne to her ears on the heavy perfumed air came the wailing, moaning, sobbing tones of the Danube waltz!

### Christmas Bells.

O list the joyful sounding bells!  
What is the tale their music tells?  
'Tis but the oft-repeated strain  
First heard on Judah's star-lit plain.  
When shepherds, watching flocks by night,  
Saw round them shine a wondrous light,  
And trembling heard the angels say:  
"Fear not—to you is born this day

### A HAPPY NEW YEAR.

Unless we believe that true happiness can come only through high development, the wish for happiness for ourselves and others is not the best wish that we can offer. But how naturally and sincerely the wish rises from our hearts. Most of us have learned that happiness seldom comes when we set out to seek for it, that it is often near when we think it very remote, and far away often when we fancy it quite near. It is not found in circumstances and surroundings so much as in ourselves, and lies more within our reach and control than we often realize. Dutiful ways are not always the pleasantest or easiest, but it is the earnest following of these ways that gives happiness. In reaching out toward noble ends, seeking each day the means by which to grow toward the higher life, we find the sweetest content possible this side of heaven. We must fight evil wherever seen and struggle to get up higher as best we can. What Arnold says in his great poem on sorrow may also be said of struggle. It is:

"Shadow to life, moving where life doth move;  
Nor to be laid aside until one lays  
Living aside, with all its changing states,  
Birth, growth, decay, love, hatred, pleasure,  
Pain,  
Being and doing."

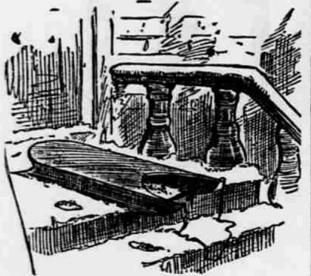
Writes a friend: "Whatever serves to warm and vivify those processes of thought, sometimes too coldly intellectual, by which we arrive at our conclusions respecting the worth and meaning of life, is of value. Right here we find the use of Christmas time and other holiday seasons, of which we have too few. They help to preserve the ideal side of life. The cheery greetings of "Merry Christmas," and "Happy New Year," may not suffice of themselves to usher in the brotherly helpfulness and love of good will to men; but they serve as excellent helps and reminders of duty to that end. Imagination, the spirit of "make believe," which in its broadest interpretation is but the endeavor to make true our highest conception of the beautiful and good, is as necessary a factor in the solution of life's problems as the industries of scientific reason. "It takes the ideal to blow a hair's breadth off."

"The dust of the actual," says Mrs. Browning, in oft-quoted lines, "how it chokes and stifles and blinds thy vision, this dust of the actual, when we attempt to remove it by some house-cleaning process, as the weekly sweeping. But open the windows, let the sweet airs of heaven blow breezily through the soul, and both vision and understanding are quickly cleared. Our holidays are valuable, then, as means for increasing man's sensibility to happiness, which becomes both a virtue and an accomplishment in an age given over to restless, joyless acquisition. We are at such pains to cultivate ourselves in a variety of other arts, that it seems a pity that of simple happiness should be left out."

The following verses, relating to the opening of the new year, will doubtless be acceptable to many of our readers at this time:

A flower unblown; a Book unread;  
A Tree with fruit unharvested;  
A Path untrod; a house whose rooms  
Lack yet the heart's divine perfumes;  
A Landscape whose wide border lies  
In silent shade 'neath silent skies;  
A wondrous Fountain yet unsealed;  
A Casket with its gifts concealed;  
This is the year that for you waits  
Beyond to-morrow's mystic gates.

Oh, may this Flower unfold to you  
Visions of beauty sweet and new;  
This Book on golden pages trace  
Your sacred joys and deeds of grace;  
May all the fruit of this strange Tree  
Luscious and rosy-tinted be;  
This Path through fields of knowledge go;  
This House with love's content o'erflow;  
This Landscape glitter with the dew  
Of blessed hopes and friendships true;  
This Fountain's living crystal cheer,  
As fall the springs that once were dear,  
This Casket with such gems be stored  
As shine in lives that love the Lord."



This is the way  
Little Johnny Gray  
Left his sleigh.

would please Hal to see how she had improved.

She dreamed of the happy future that was to be passed with him, and when she saw smiling wives and husbands with their children around them, she blushed as she thought of how blest she would be with Hal's children in her arms.

She felt as though she trod on air, as though the world was made for her and Hal to love each other in, and that every human being, every living thing, must share and rejoice in her happiness. Life was golden to her, and her loveliness became almost radiant. Love beautifies all women and Hilda was at rly absorbed in her love for Hal.

The days passed on and Christmas night had come. Hilda was among



This is the way  
That old Mr. Gray  
Met the sleigh.

A Saviour, which is Christ the Lord!"  
The Heavenly host with one accord  
Joined with the angel, saying, then:  
"Peace on earth, good will to men!"

No messenger in angel guise  
Comes now before our mortal eyes  
Nor evermore in our dull ears  
Shall sound a voice from Heav'nly spheres;  
Nor need we, like the men of old,  
Wander to seek with gifts and gold,  
The babe who in the manger lay,  
In David's city far away!  
Lo! at our doors he waits to take  
The gift none is too poor to make—  
A heart which will His love receive,  
And humbly say, "Lord, I believe!"

For this—the bells at Christmas ring!  
"Good tidings of great joy" they bring!  
For "whoso" will" at length may see  
Him who once walked in Galilee!

Little boy or girl, commencing with Merry Christmas, be not simply good, but good for something.



This is the way  
The fiery, untamed sleigh  
Landed Gray.